(d) the steps proposed to review the functioning of disaster management?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) The Crisis Management Group is already a broad-based forum in which representatives of various Ministries / organisations of the Government of India are represented. It is chaired by the Central Relief Commissioner in the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation and it meets as often as is necessary during crisis situations. The representatives of the States affected by calamities are also invited to the meetings.

(b) and (c) Under the existing scheme for financing relief expenditure, the state-wise annual allocations of Calamity Relief Fund have been made on the basis of the recommendations of the Xth Finance Commission. The Commission took into account the average of ceilings of expenditure approved by the Government of India for management of natural calamities during the ten years, 1980—89. The Xth Finance Commission is currently reviewing the existing scheme including the Calamity Relief Fund's allocations to states on the basis of representations and comments received from State Governments and various departments of Government of India.

(d) The State Governments have adequate arrangements for disaster management. They undertake rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures in the event of natural calamities, in accordance with the provision contained in their relief manuals / codes.

Export of Floriculture Products

4238. SHRI G.Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether this Ministry is working on an ambitious target of raising the export of cut flowers, tissue-culture plants and other floriculture products;

(b) whether to gain entry in the higher-end of the blooming international flower trade, any research is being undertaking to evolve hybrid varieties of orchids, which are in the great demand because of their longevity; and

(c) if so, the broad features of any plan formulated by his Ministry in this behalf and how it is aimed to achieve the target for the export of horticultural and floricultural products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b)Yes, Sir.

(c)ICAR is setting up a National Research Centre of Orchids during the 8th Plan with a total outlay of Rs. 120.0C lakhs to undertake mission oriented research on all aspects of orchids improvement and production.

On the recommendations of the Group of Ministers set up for enhancement of export of horticultural / floricultural products, action plan and project proposals have been developed identifying commodities and infrastructural facilities to be created, investments required and the policy issues to be resolved. Implementation of these recommendations have already been initiated.

News Paper Report on Rapeseed Production

4239. SHRI G.Y. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been invited to the news item captioned "US firms's patent threatens rapeseed production appearing in the "Business Standard," New Delhi dated the 8th August, 1994;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter as ascertained by his Ministry;

(c)the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d)how Government propose to meet the threat posed to the Indian rapeseed crop from the genetically engineered edible oil derived orginally from the rapeseed by the US-based biotechnology corporation, Calgene?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) to (d) The Ministry is aware of the news item on the said subject. US-based Biotech Corporation, Calgene has reportedly obtained patent for rapeseed mustard for high levels of "laurate canola" which makes it ideal for both industrial and edible oil purposes. Canola quality means low

or very low erucic acid (a long fatty acid chain), and zero or very low glucosinolate. Erucic acid is considered to affect the nutritional balance of the oil composition, and glucosinolate is harmful to all animals except the ruminating ones.

Recognising the need for developing canola quality of rapeseed i.e. with zero or low erucic acid and zero or low glucosinolate, the ICAR is according due priority to the development of rapeseed mustard varieties of '00 quality.

Brackish Water Prawn Culture

4240. SHRI RAHASBIHARIBARIK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a)whether there is a vast scope to promote Brackish Water Prawn Culture in Orissa;

(b) if so, the steps taken in the direction;

(c) the schemes in hand with the Government at present; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

The Government of Orissa has informed that about 32,600 ha. brackish water area is suitable to promote prawn culture in the State.

(b) Some of the important steps taken are:—

(i) The State has set up 4 Brackish Water Fish Farmers' Development Agencies (BFDAs) in the coastal districts to provide technical and financial support to the prawn farmers, sanctioned under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Brackish water Fish Farm Development'.

(ii) A training centre has been set up at Paradeep to impart training on brackish water prawn farming to farmers.

(iii) To meet the demand for prawn seed, 3 prawn seed hatcheries with a total production capacity of 330 million prawn seed have been set up in the State.

(c)snd (d) Under the World Bank assisted Shrimp and Fish Culture Project under operation in Orissa, there is proposal to develop 1484 ha. of brackish water area at Jagatjore Banapada in Kendrapada District and Bieipur and Narendrapur in Bhadrak district. Besides, there is also a proposal to establish six medium capacity prawn seed hatcheries. The total estimated cost of the project in Orissa is about Rs. 4085 crores.

Expenditure Incurred on Sending Experts Abroad

4241. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a)the number of Agricultural Experts, scientists and officials sent abroad at Govemmenl cost for studies, conferences etc. during the last three years; and

(b)what is the amount of money spend on the foreign visits of these above mentioned persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Hosue.

Export of Cereals

4242. SHRI K.M. KHAN: SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that experts in farming and milling are of the view that India could increase its export of cereals by 300 per cent in three years if given the incentives and inputs; and

(b) if so, what is the current position in relation to the export of cereals and what steps are being taken to realise this aim?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b) The export of cereals especially rice, has registered significant growth during the last three years. To facilitate the exports, restrictions like minimum export price and quantitative ceilings, have been progressively relaxed.

Subsidy to Agricultural Sector

4243. SHRI RAM NARAYANGOSWAMI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: